



Memorandum

TO: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES &
EDUCATION COMMITTEE

FROM: David Sykes

SUBJECT: ANIMAL CARE AND SERVICES
SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT

DATE: March 25, 2013

Approved

Date

4/2/13

RECOMMENDATION

Accept the semi-annual report on the activities of the Animal Care and Services Division.

OVERVIEW

The following memorandum provides an update on the activities of the Animal Care and Services (ACS) Division. ACS is responsible for sheltering and field services programs related to domestic animals in the City of San José and the contract cities of Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, and Saratoga. Field services include responding to aggressive, injured, sick, or stray animals, dead animal pick up, barking dog complaints, vicious or dangerous animal regulation, pet shop inspections, injured or sick wildlife, and licensing services.

The Animal Care Center, located on Monterey Road, provides shelter for stray and homeless domestic animals, reunites lost pets with their families, places animals in responsible new homes, and, when necessary, euthanizes animals that are suffering or are dangerous. Currently, the Division provides animal care and services to about 1,200,000 residents in Santa Clara County, which is nearly 65% of the human population.

This report details the activities of the 2012 calendar year, unless otherwise indicated. The statistical information includes data from service contracts with the cities of Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, and Saratoga.

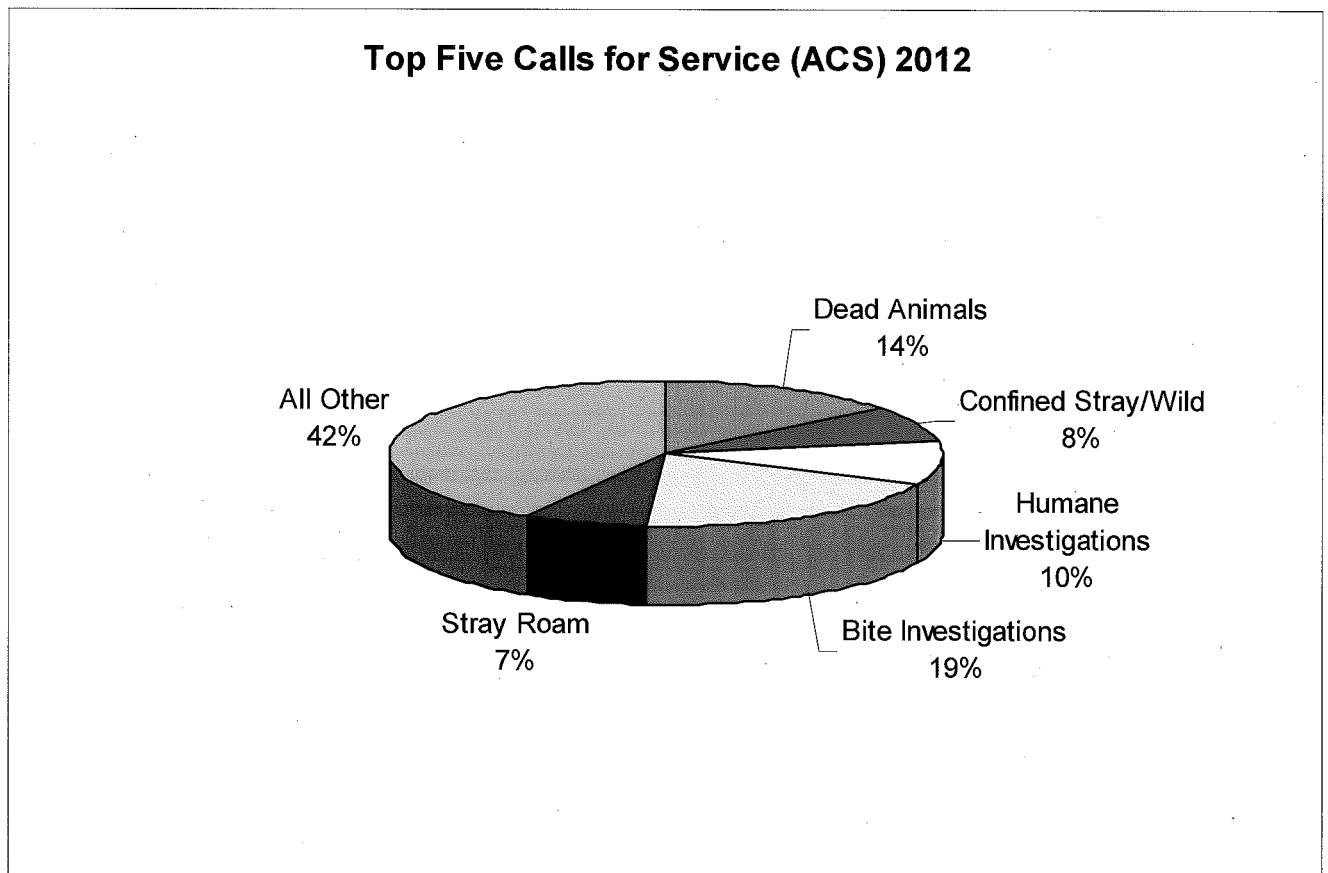
ANALYSIS

Field Operations

During 2012, ACS officers responded in person to 23,093 calls for service. These calls are categorized into three priority levels with Priority 1 (P1) calls being the most urgent (aggressive dogs, injured animals, police assists). Priority 1 calls represent about 15% of the total service calls. Priority 2 calls are urgent but are not considered emergencies and include animal bite reports, confined animals, animals in traps, and agency assists. Priority 3 calls are less urgent than Priority 1 and 2 calls, and include loose animals, dead animals, and calls that do not pose immediate threats to public health and safety.

Key metrics related to service calls include number of calls, distribution of types of calls, and response to priority 1 service calls. Chart 1 below shows the five most common types of calls for animal care and services in 2012.

CHART 1: TOP FIVE CALLS FOR SERVICE



Calls for Service – Calls completed by field services in 2012 remained essentially the same compared to the previous year. There are 10 Animal Services Officers (ASO) who provide services and emergency response to San Jose and Milpitas. Three additional officers respond to calls for service in the contract cities of Saratoga, Los Gatos and Cupertino. On average, 3-5 officers are on duty during the day shift and 2-3 during the evening shift. Using a modified model, the field staff has been able to decrease the average response time to most types of calls and has been able to substantially reduce the previously existing call backlog. The most striking example of improved response is the number of calls related to stray roaming dogs. Stray dogs that are not injured, sick, or acting aggressive are categorized as a Priority 3. In 2011, due to the call backlog, officers responded to 301 of this type of call. When a non-emergency stray dog is entered into the dispatch queue, it remains in the database for seven days, and if an officer has not responded, it is cancelled because too much time has passed to provide an effective response. In 2012, under new leadership and response techniques, the officers were able to respond to 1,622 calls about non-emergency stray dogs. This has enabled ACS to provide for more proactive enforcement and better service response to resident concerns.

Types of Calls – The field services unit responds to approximately 50 different call types. In addition to the five most common service request types shown in Chart 1 (which comprise about 58% of the calls), other types of common calls include injured or sick animals, cat complaints, animal nuisances, and agency assists.

Response Time – Due to changes in how officers respond to calls for service, officers are able to focus more directly on the highest priority calls and were able to achieve the best-ever performance in responding to Priority 1 calls within one hour or less. In 2012, the 95% performance level was well above the target level of 85%.

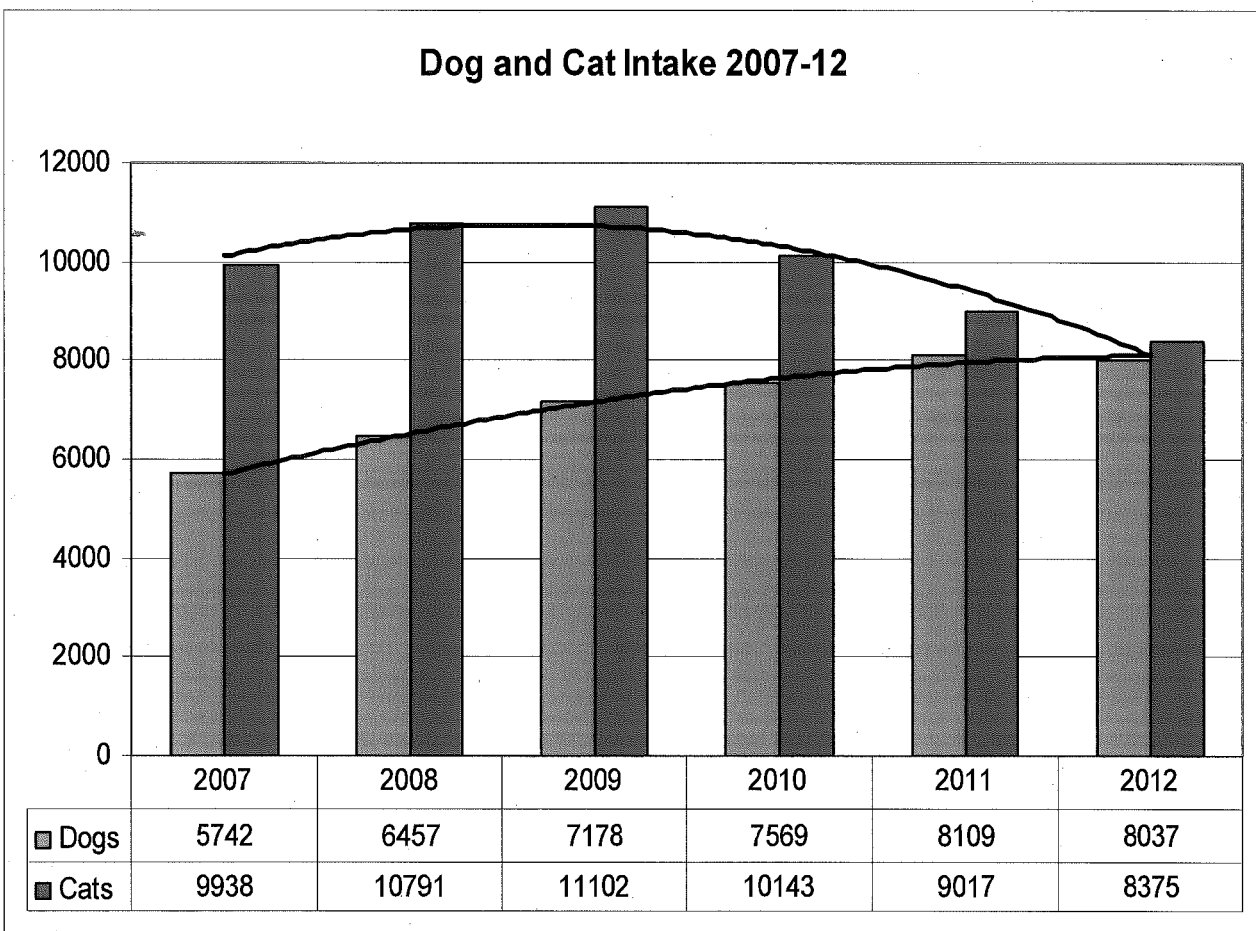
Priority 2 calls for service are urgent but not emergencies. The response target for Priority 2 is to respond within six hours. In 2012, that target was achieved 60% of the time. Priority 3 calls have a target response time of 36 hours, and that was accomplished almost 82% of the time. All of the response rates are the highest in the Division's history and have improved over the previous reporting period. Currently, the Division has a backlog of over 300 calls waiting for service.

Shelter Operations

Last year, the Animal Care Center (ACC) provided shelter to 17,214 domestic animals and 944 wild animals. The months of November through February are generally the lowest volume months in an animal shelter. March and October are transitional months and April through September are very high volume due to seasonal litters of cats.

Animal Intake – Total domestic animal intake decreased slightly compared to 2011. For the first time since opening the shelter in 2004, dog intake decreased by 1% (-72), and cats decreased by 7% (-712). The decrease in dogs is particularly noteworthy. During the preceding five years, dog intake increased at an average annual rate of 7%-8% per year. Therefore, a 1% year-to-year translates to an actual change of 8% or more compared to the five-year trend. There is still much

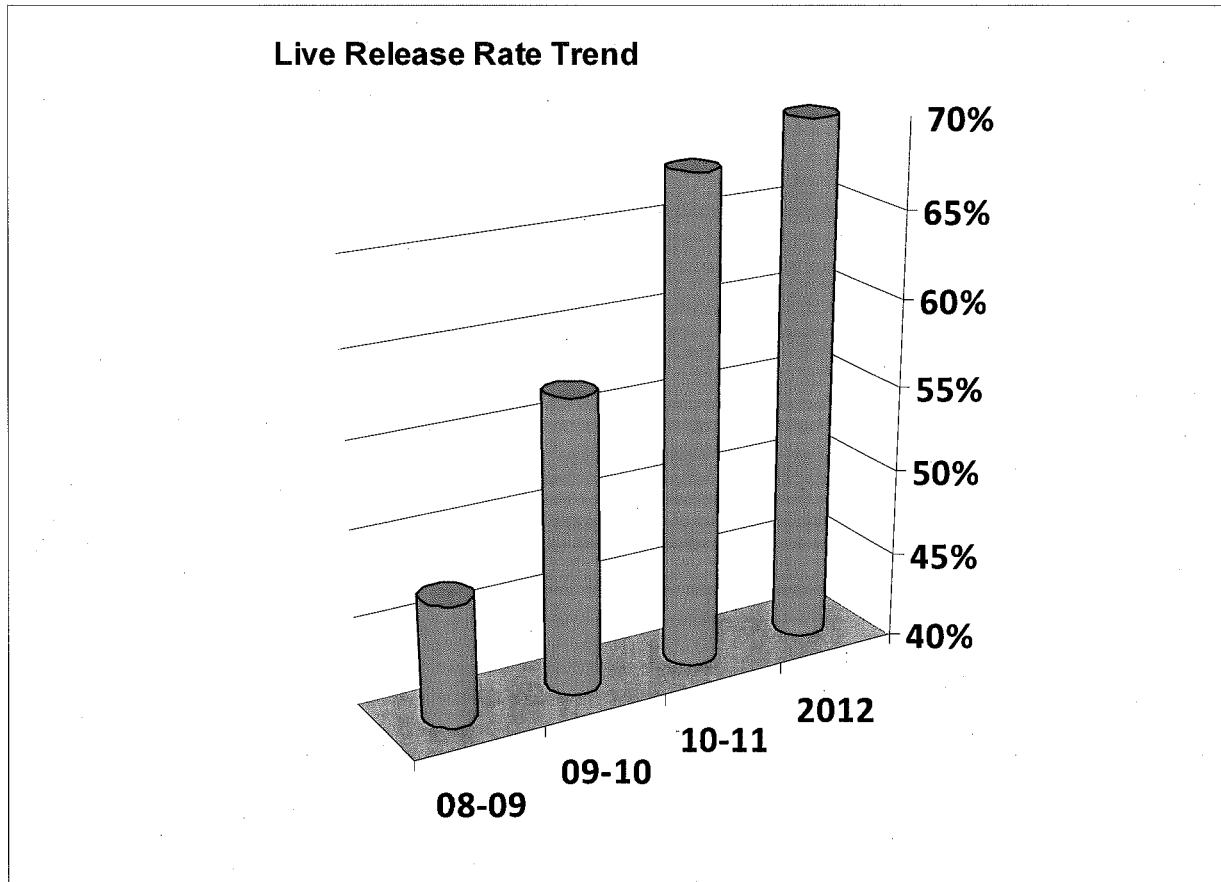
work to be done to decrease the number of dogs entering the shelter as the shelter was not designed for the current volume of dogs received. As previously reported, ACS has been working in partnership with the Humane Society of Silicon Valley and a grant provided by Pet Smart Charities to provide FREE spay and neuter for any Chihuahuas in the following five zip codes: 95111, 95112, 95116, 95122, and 95127. Although it is still early to be certain (only one year of grant activity), it is encouraging to see the trend change as much as it has in a short period of time. Chihuahuas remain the major cause of the dog population increase over the last several years and will continue to be a challenge in the near term. Chart 2 (below) shows the changing populations of dogs and cats over the last six years.

CHART 2: DOG AND CAT INTAKE

Live Release Rate (LRR) – The Live Release Rate is an industry term that measures the number of animals that leave an animal shelter alive. This is determined by dividing the number of animals that were released alive (to their owner, adoptions, rescue) by the total number that were admitted alive. Based on national statistics for an open-door public animal shelter, a very successful LRR for dogs and cats combined exceeds 80%.

Total combined (dog + cat) LRR for FY 2012 at the Animal Care Center was 73%, which is the highest rate ever achieved by the shelter and three points higher than 2011. This is significantly higher than the national average of 36%, and exceeds the division's five-year goal of 65%. Individually, the LRR for dogs was 75% and for cats, it was 68%. Chart 3 (below) demonstrates the improvement in the LRR since 2008-09

CHART 3: LIVE RELEASE RATE



Adoptions – Overall adoptions were 3,153 and were flat compared to the same period last year. The Animal Care Center offered several special pricing events at various times during the year and also was able to receive occasional media coverage. The division has begun to use grant funding from Maddie's Fund to provide needed resources to conduct additional outreach and improve adoptions. A new location for offsite adoptions has been established at the Pet Food Express on Blossom Hill Road in Almaden, and at special events. Grant-funded staff is also helping to provide better adoption customer service at the shelter.

Municipal Code Changes

ACS anticipates proposing several changes to the Municipal Code regarding animals this Spring/Summer. These changes include several improvements to the dangerous dog codes, updates to care and conditions regarding grooming and accumulation of feces, exemptions to livestock and small animal limits for farms, and changes to fee structures. It also will include a proposal to post pictures and locations of dangerous dogs on the ACS website to inform residents of dangerous dogs in their community.

Cost Recovery

Cost recovery for all operations is budgeted to be 46% for FY 2012-2013. At the mid-point of the year, cost recovery is projected to be 42%. This is primarily due to shortfalls in license collection as a result of staff shortages in the processing unit. The Division is exploring the use of an outside vendor to provide certain processing services so that revenues do not suffer when there is staff turnover. Savings from vacant processing positions can offset the cost for the alternate service delivery. This transition should help to reduce the gap in revenues in this fiscal year and improve cost recovery.

NEXT STEPS

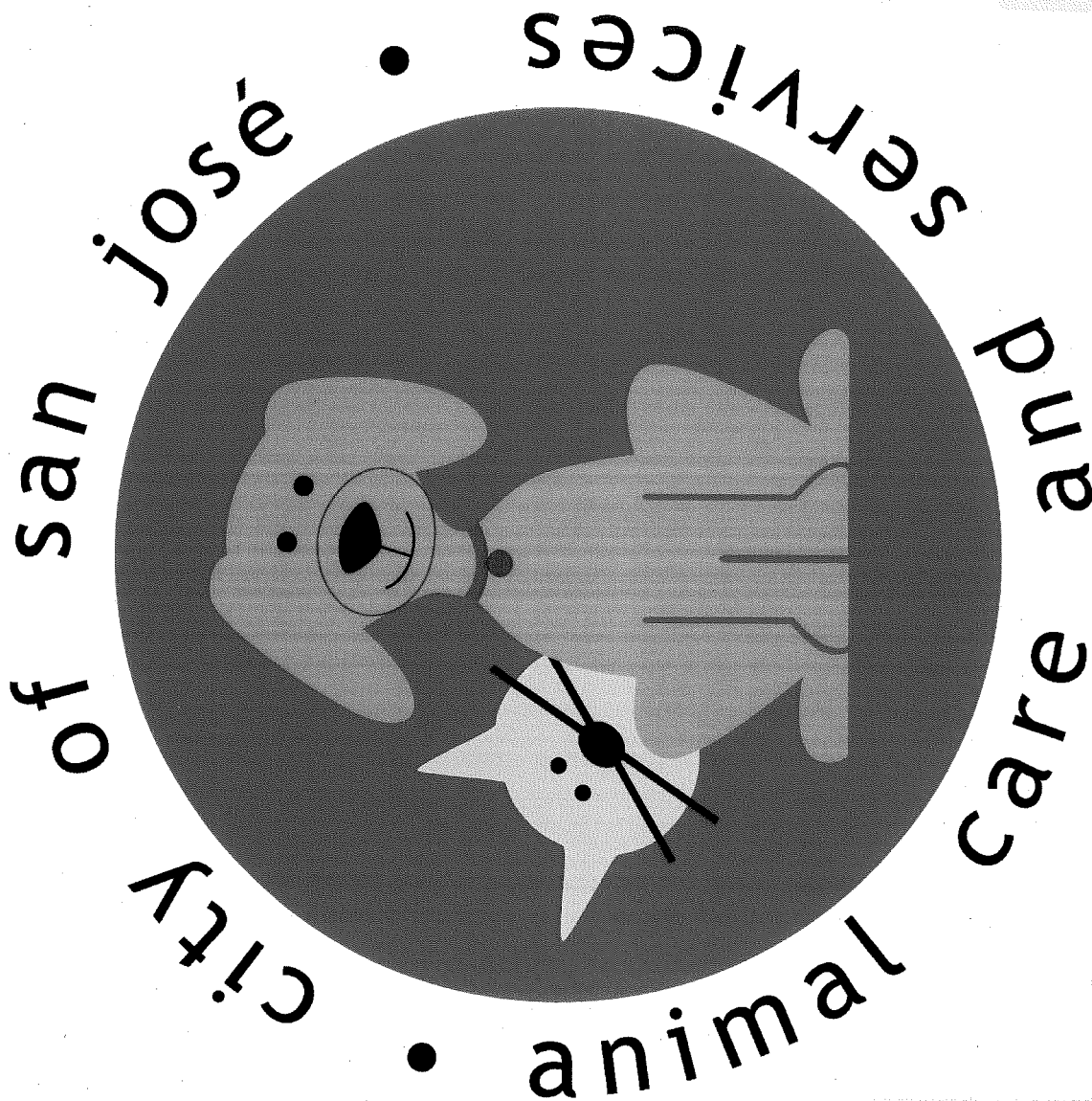
Major programming efforts will include municipal code updates, improved adoptions, increased licensing, continued implementation of the Chihuahua grant, and use of the Maddie's Fund Grant to provide better overall care and outcomes for homeless dogs and cats.

/s/

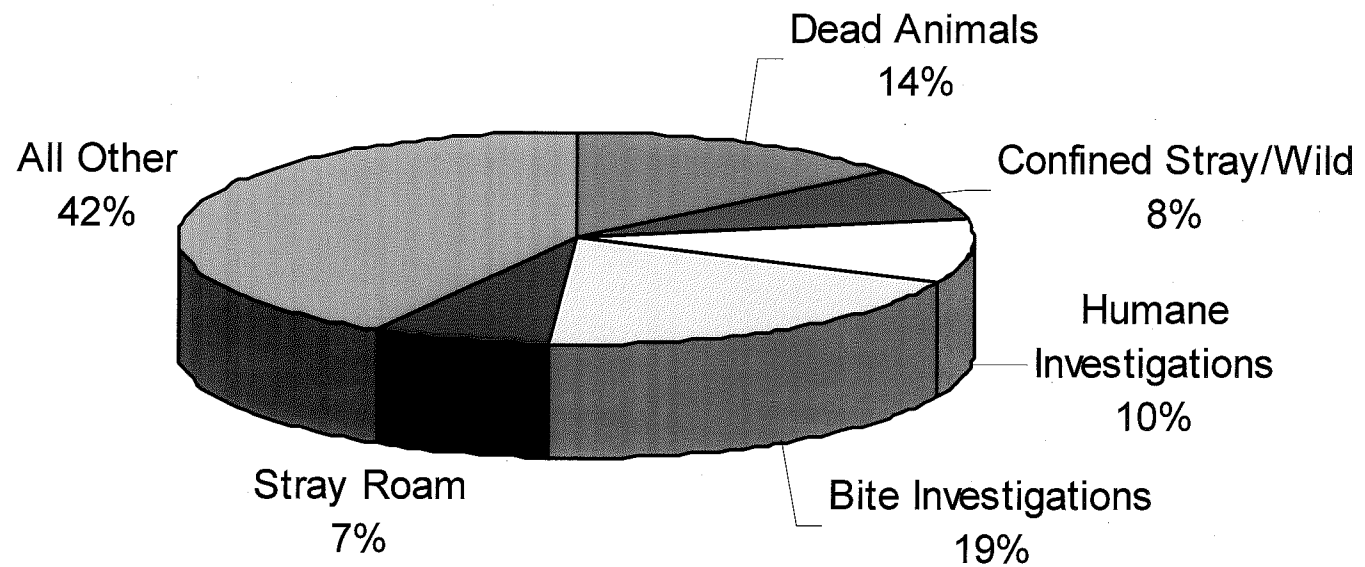
DAVID SYKES

Director of Public Works

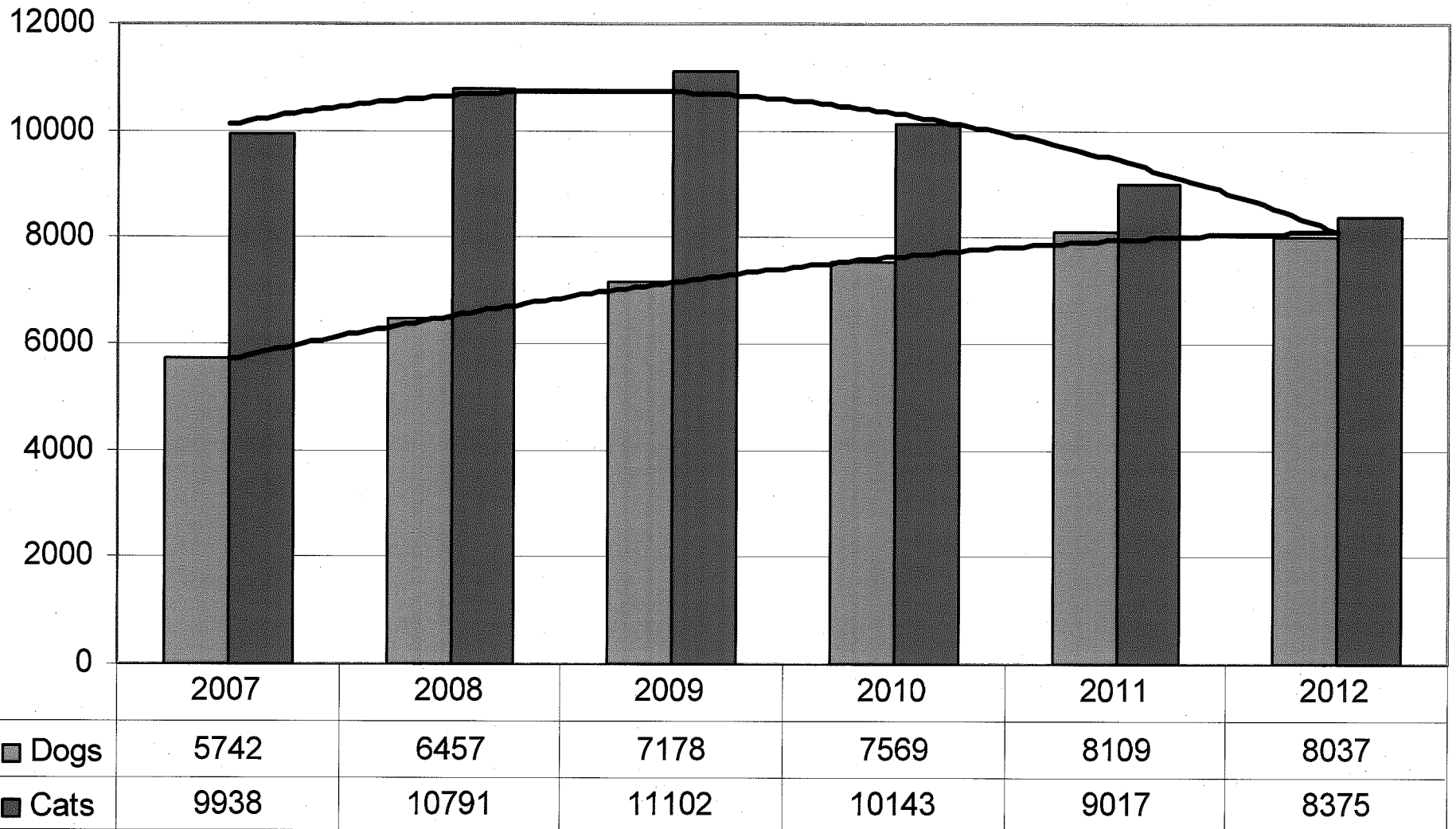
For questions, contact Jon Cicirelli, Deputy Director, Animal Care and Services, 408-794-7223.



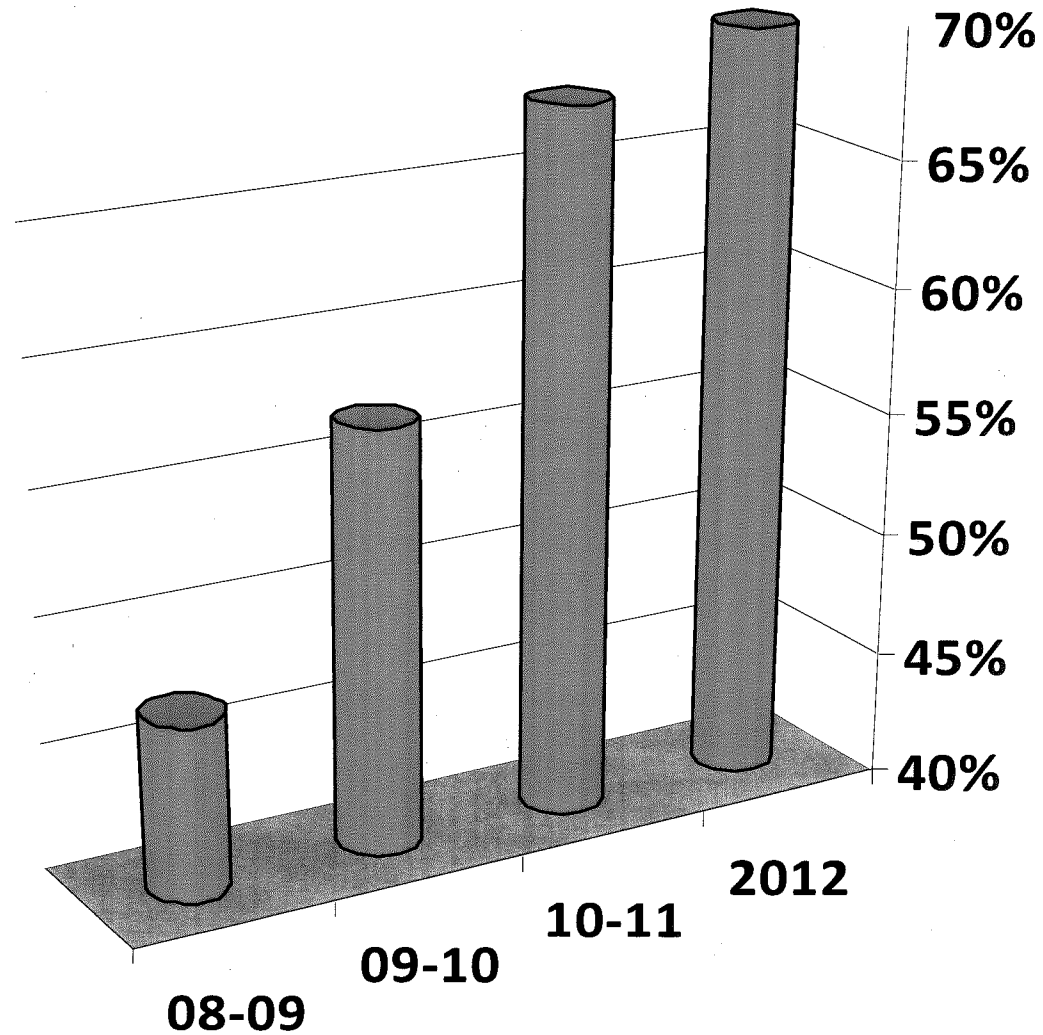
Top Five Calls for Service (ACS) 2012



Dog and Cat Intake 2007-12



Live Release Rate Trend



Next Steps and Goals

- Municipal Code changes
- Increased adoptions/promotions
- Implementation Grants
- Increased licensing and pursue other grant opportunities
- www.sanjoseanimals.com

